

## Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 HA-05 ACDA-12

OMB-01 TRSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

AID-05 /117 W

-----001660 261602Z /46

P R 240600Z MAR 78

FM AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 793

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY SANA

USMISSION USUN NY

USCINCEUR

CINCUSNAVEUR

CINCPAC

CINCPACFLT

COMIDEASTFOR

USS FOX

S E C R E T DJIBOUTI 422

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV, PINS, PINT, ASEC, DJ, ET,SO

SUBJ: ARREST ORDER MADE FOR AHMED DINI; AFAR LEADERS SPEAK OF  
CIVIL WAR

REF: (A) DJIBOUTI 80 (B) DJIBOUTI 216 (C) DJIBOUTI 347 (ALL NOTAL)

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1. SUMMARY. LIKE THE WILL O' THE WISP, THE THREAT OF AHMED  
DINI APPEARS TO BE UNNERVING GOVERNMENT. ACCORDING KNOWLEDGEABLE  
SOURCES, AN ARREST ORDER HAS BEEN ISSUED FOR HIM AND SENATOR  
BARKAT, ON GROUNDS SEDITION. NEITHER IS KNOWN TO BE IN COUNTRY,  
AND GOVERNMENT IS WATCHING ALL INCOMING FLIGHTS. AFAR LEADERS  
CONSIDER ARREST ORDER TO BE OF TRIBAL INSPIRATION, AND CONSIDER  
IT TO BE DECLARATION OF WAR AGAINST AFARS.

2. ON TUESDAY, MARCH 21, ALL INCOMING FLIGHTS AT DJIBOUTI AIRPORT WERE GIVEN DETAILED INSPECTION BY POLICE AND GENDARMERIE. THIS CAUSED DELAYS ON FLIGHTS AND A SCANDAL IN THE CITY. APPARENTLY, ALL AFAR MEMBERS OF POLICE AND GENDARMERIE UNITS WERE SENT AWAY, AND ISSA POLICE BECAME RULE OF THE DAU. IT HAD EVIDENTLY BEEN RUMORED THAT DINI WAS ON HIS WAY BACK TO DJIBOUTI. THE EXACT DEPARTURE POINT FOR HIS RETURN REMAINS UNKNOWN. IT IS KNOWN THAT HE WAS RECENTLY IN ADDIS ABABA (FOLLOWING VISITS TO ABIDJAN AND DAKAR). IT IS RUMORED THAT HE ALSO VISITED MOSCOW AND THAT HE IS NOW IN ADEN. IN ANY CASE, ALL FLIGHTS FROM NORTH AND SOUTH, ADDIS AND ADEN WERE CLOSELY WATCHED AND AIRCRAFT

SEARCHED ON TUESDAY.

3. AN AFAR DELEGATION, UNDER LEADERSHIP NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEPUTY DABALE (REFTEL A), AND INCLUDING DEPUTIES ALI AHMED SULTAN, HABIB HOHAMED, ABDOULKADER DAOUD, MOHAMED DATO AND HASSAN MOHAMED KAMIL, CALLED ON CHARGE 23 MARCH TO DISCUSS SITUATION AND PROTEST AGAINST AHMED DINI ARREST ORDER. THEY WERE UNABLE OR UNWILLING PROVIDE INFO ON PRESENT WHEREABOUTS DINI. THEY PROVIDED DETAILS ON AIRPORT SECURITY DETAIL WHICH REPORTEDLY EXCLUDED ALL AFARS AND EXPRESSED THEIR CHAGRIN THAT GOVERNMENT HAD TAKEN SUCH A PROVOCATIVE ACT. THEY EXPLAINED THAT ARREST ORDER MADE AS RESULT OF DININ STATEMENTS ON BBC (DJIBOUTI 216) AND OTHER INDICATIONS THAT AUTHORITY GOVERNMENT BEING CHALLENGED.

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THE ROUND ALSO INTENDS TO CALL ON FRENCH AND SAUDI AMBASSADORS.

4. IN THEIR CONVERSATION, THEY STATED THAT ARREST OF AHMED DINI WOULD LEAD TO CIVIL WAR. THE TESTIFIED THAT NO SUCH ORDER COULD BE PROPERLY MADE UNDER THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION WHICH GIVES IMMUNITY TO MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. THEY PROTESTED THAT SUCH AN ORDER SHOULD NOT HAVE BEEN MADE WITHOUT THE ADVICE OF THE FULL CABINET. NO SUCH JOINT DECISION HAD BEEN MADE, AND SO THEREFORE THEY CONCLUDED THAT IT WAS A UNILATERAL DECISION OF THE PRESIDENT AND THE MINISTER OF INTERIOR.

5. THE CHARGE EXPLAINED TO HIM, AS HE DID FOR THE FIRST AFAR DELEGATION, THAT HE RECEIVED THEM AS DJIBOUTIANS AND AS MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, AND THE U.S. HAS NO INTEREST IN BECOMING INVOLVED IN AFAR/ISSA FRACTIONAL PROBLEMS. IN REPLY TO A QUESTION FROM THE DELEGATION CONCERNING THE U.S. POSITION IN REGARD TO THE SOMALI-ETHIOPIAN PROBLEM, IT WAS EXPLAINED THAT THE U.S. REQUIRES A GUARANTEE OF ALL FRONTIERS IN THE REGION AS A CONDITION FOR OUR ASSISTANCE. THIS RELIEVED THE DEPUTIES WHO CONSIDER SOMALIA TO BE THE ROOT OF MOST PROBLEMS DOMESTICALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY IN THE REGION. THEY STATED THEIR APPRECIATION OF OUR HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY AND BELIEVED IT TO BE ONE OF THEIR MOST

IMPORTANT SAFEGUARDS. THE CHARGE CAUTIONED THEM AGAINST ANY  
PRECIPITOUS ACTIONS WHILE ANY BRIDGES REMAINED OPEN TO THEM

6. DJIBOUTI'S FRAGILE SITUATION CONTINUES TO WORSEN.  
WE HOPE TO MAINTAIN OUR OPENINGS TO ALL CONTENDERS IN THIS  
ARCHAIC ETHNIC DUEL. THE ARREST OF DINI ON SUCH FLIMSY GROUNDS  
COULD PROVE TO BE SPARK FOR CONSIDERABLE PROBLEMS.  
WE WILL ATTEMPT TO GET MORE REPORTS ON THIS SITUATION IN  
NEXT DAYS.  
CLARKE

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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